

Woodford Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	128493
Inspection date	26 November 2007
Inspector	Angela Jackson
Setting Address	209 High Road, South Woodford, London, E18 2PA
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Registered person	Woodford Pre-School Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Woodford Pre School has been registered since 1992 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from Memorial Hall in South Woodford, in the London borough of Redbridge. Children have access to the large main hall with toilets and washing facilities, and an adjacent smaller hall. There is an enclosed area for outside play. The group opens five days a week during school term times from 09.30 until 12.00. There is also a Tuesday afternoon session from 12:45 until 15.00.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre school at any one time. There are currently 56 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 14 funded three-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre school employs seven staff; of these six of the staff have, or are working towards, early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3, and the manager is qualified to level 4. The setting receives support from the Local Authority Early Years Pedagogy and Advisory team and is a member of the Pre-school Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, light, clean and airy hall. Their health is effectively promoted as they are learning to care for themselves and confidently manage many of their needs. They recognise when they need to use the toilet and wash their hands afterwards. Children are able to do this with the minimum of support as the toilets are clean and easily accessible to them. There are booster steps in front of each basin and liquid soap and paper towels within reach. Children enjoy the experience as they climb up and survey the facilities, chatting to staff and other children about the water and what they are going to do next. At snack time, staff call out for children that it is ready and remind them to go and wash their hands in preparation. Children understand that this is the correct routine and are happy to follow the good hygiene rules. Their independence is further encouraged as they dress themselves appropriately for outdoor activities, choosing boots and finding their coats on cold days. Indoors, they look for aprons to protect their clothes when painting or playing with messy materials.

The setting's 'procedure to dispense medicine' informs parents of the policy that children are not given medication, other than for chronic conditions such as asthma, during the course of the session. The good health of all children is protected as children who are not well are expected to be kept at home in order to minimise the risk of cross infection. In the event of an injury that is more serious than can be treated within the setting, parents give prior permission for children to be taken to hospital, with their personal details. There are two staff members who currently hold relevant first aid qualifications and another member of staff has recently completed a course and is awaiting her certificate. There is a well stocked first aid kit although the expectation is that minor injuries are usually only cleaned with water or have a cold compress applied. Accidents are recorded and parents sign to acknowledge they are aware of the circumstances and treatment given. These precautions ensure children are given appropriate care.

Parents provide a wide variety of fruits for children to eat at snack time. These include kiwi, apple, banana and blueberries and helps children to meet their 'five a day' target for health. Children choose between a drink of milk or water to accompany the fruit and help staff lift the jug as they pour from it into their mugs. Children sit with friends around small tables that have been wiped down with anti-bacteria spray to ensure they are clean and free from germs. The time is used to help children develop good social skills as they help one another to choose which colour bowl and beaker they prefer and discuss the benefits of eating healthy foods. The risk of dehydration is minimised as children have access to a jug of water from which they can help themselves to a drink, at any time during the session.

Children enjoy regular physical play, both indoors and out. An indoor section of the hall is set up with equipment that is rotated regularly to maintain a high level of interest and to develop a variety of skills such as balancing on low beams and crawling through a tunnel of hoops, making a train of wriggling little bodies. Children love to run about, making up games that very often incorporate super heroes such as spider man. The outside play area provides the space and interest to do this. There is both grass and hard surfaces and children are able to climb on the slide or to ride around on bikes or wheelie cars to develop and gain control of large muscles. Ball games of throw and catch help develop good eye to hand coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and quickly settle in as they are warmly welcomed by staff who ensure they are fully informed about individual needs and preferences in order to reduce anxiety and to help children feel comfortable. Children sometimes bring a comforter with them, gradually gaining sufficient confidence and a sense of security, to play for extended periods without it. Regular risk assessments are carried out to ensure the areas children use each day are safe. The manager checks the outdoor area before children go outside to play and staff are vigilant in supervising children. However, the outdoor play area has several gates leading from it that are accessible to visitors and other users of the church facilities. Staff are aware of this and position themselves so that they have a clear view of the entire area at all times.

Space within the nursery is effectively organised, allowing children to move around safely, freely and independently. Toys and resources are carefully selected to match children's interests and to challenge them to try new experiences in order to make progress towards the early learning goals, for example, the Tuesday afternoon session is attended in the main by older three year olds. Activities planned and set up for this group are different to most of the activities offered during the morning. Toys and equipment are changed regularly to maintain interest and to encourage children to learn new skills. Wall displays of children's work help children to gain a sense of achievement and to feel valued.

Children are safeguarded by staff that have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures. There is a written policy which is shared with the parents. Children and staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. These measures contribute to the safety and welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children eagerly enter the hall creating a buzz of excitement as they move towards a particular area of interest. This might be to the creative play section where they happily sit sponge painting to make colourful pictures of flowers or to the sticking and cutting table where they create collages using tissue, wool and ribbon. Children benefit from playing in small groups or pairs as they set up role play in the home corner taking orders and preparing meals of colourful spaghetti bolognese or risotto. They set the table and use the plastic cutlery to 'cut up' the hot food to prevent it burning. This encourages children to put into practice what they have observed in real life and to use their imaginations to make sense of it. They are learning to cope with their emotions through gaining understanding of caring for themselves and for others and by sharing and taking turns. The book corner provides space for relaxation and quieter activities as children sit on the carpet and lean against the soft toys and cushions, to look at books and have stories read to them. Children are interested in the stories and name animals in the pictures, reflecting on where they live and what they eat. They are keen to describe their own experiences such as 'we found a hedgehog under our caravan' and enjoy demonstrating how the hedgehog moves. Children come together in a large group to play instruments such as shaking and ringing a range of different bells as they learn songs in preparation for a performance for parents. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to providing activities that meet the needs of individuals so that children develop a range of skills across all areas of learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use information provided by parents, together with their own informal observations, to assess children's starting points. Medium and short term plans are adapted to take into account children's known strengths and needs to help them make good progress towards the early learning goals; for example, staff support learning in two areas, mathematics and fine coordination skills, by using individual's previous assessments to work one to one, or in very small groups, developing pencil control and the basics of numerical notation. Other adult led activities include creative work such as decorating and making lanterns for display. Under supervision, but independently, children use proper scissors to cut their way through the card following the given guidelines. Children are engrossed in this task and are proud of their achievements as they bend and stick the finished article that has their name, written by themselves, inside. Children spend many glorious moments spreading their fingers and making marks and symbols in the shaving foam covering one of the tables. They trace circles of different sizes and recognise and attempt for themselves, the triangle and rectangles drawn by staff.

Children form good relationships with staff who explain and discuss, the benefits to all of getting along well together. They are encouraged to be friendly and kind and to respect everyone's right to have their own interests. Staff use good tone of voice and expression, to engage children and to encourage them to participate in several activities over the course of a session. Appropriate vocabulary is used to extend children's use of language and to involve them in their own learning, for example, at the start of the session they are told about what is available for them that day within the 'creative' area. They have easy access to a computer with suitable software programs. Children learn mouse control and to follow the instructions which gives them a chance to operate, and learn about, new technologies.

Children learn about the natural world as they discuss different foods such as vegetables for the pasta dish they are making, and through play. Good use is made of opportunities such as physical play outside in the garden area, to run around and look for insects and other creatures. While they wait for others to dress, they discuss what they might find, such as spiders, and what they might not find, such as giraffes, and the reasons for this. They are then off, searching in the planks of fencing, eyes up close, determined to be the one that finds something interesting. This game is extended further to promote understanding of size and to compare relative objects such as spiders in relation to children and children in relation to adults or giraffes, using words like bigger, smaller, taller, height. In this way, children gain valuable knowledge and understanding through play activities that motivate them to explore and investigate in order to find answers, and gives them a sense of personal fulfilment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and staff reflect the diversity of the local community and all benefit from the inclusive practice of the setting. Staff actively promote equality of opportunity and use their knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures, to help children respect difference and similarities in others; for example, staff plan activities that include celebrations of festivals from around the world. Children learn about tropical fruits and other foods, where they come from and how they are eaten by people in different countries. There is a good range of resources including books, puzzles and dolls, that promote positive images of difference. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are made welcome and are fully integrated members of the group. Staff have a good understanding of a range of special needs and effective ways to support individual children. They work in partnership with other professionals in the best

interests of children, giving feedback to parents that may be used to identify progress or concerns against the targets set on Individual Education Plans.

The atmosphere within the setting is positive and happy. Children are well behaved and cooperative. They listen to staff who offer appropriate levels of praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem and to encourage good behaviour. Parents are asked to provide information about children, their needs and preferences, at the outset and given a questionnaire a short time after children start, asking for comments and recommendations for improvement. Almost all comments are positive and appreciative of the work of the Manager and staff. Individual children are given support according to need. For example, children with English as an additional language are encouraged to develop their language skills through personalised targets. Parents are informed of progress at regular intervals. Parents state that this consistent approach and the dedication of staff, enables children to quickly become proficient in the language and to adapt socially within a new culture giving them a sense of belonging. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Well organised, easily accessible notice boards in the hallway provide parents with details about the setting including current activities and future plans. However, staff are not proactive in encouraging parents to share in the learning experience of children to make it meaningful and relevant to both home and pre school. Parents are provided with regular feedback about children's progress and receive a copy of their child's record of achievement when they leave. This includes photographs of children playing and learning and examples of their work. The entries are dated and annotated to show progress made and suggestions for making progress towards the early learning goals. The record is useful for parents and staff during transition to nursery or primary school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Sound recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff. Staff have good awareness of how to keep children safe from contact with unsuitable adults. They keep the main entrance locked and monitor visitors to the outside area through vigilance but without the benefit of appropriate security equipment. Staff are encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge further by attending appropriate training. Minimum staff:children ratios are maintained or exceeded and staff deployed effectively. The areas used by children are organised well. The requirements for maintaining documentation are met although there is some inconsistency in recording attendance times for children who arrive late. There is good regard for confidentiality. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager is an effective leader, motivating and involving staff in all aspects of the provision. She constantly strives for improvement and makes good use of the self evaluation process as a tool to manage this. Staff meet regularly to discuss future plans and work well as a team. They share their knowledge of individual children to plan activities and look at ways to extend and challenge children further.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there has been a review, as recommended, of the setting's policies and procedures. The registration form signed by parents now includes areas for consent to take

children and their records to hospital in the event of an emergency. This is currently being revised to make it clearer as to the treatment that may be given by a medical professional. Other documents that have been updated in line with regulations include the lost child policy and the child protection policy.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure all areas used by children are secure and inaccessible to strangers
- ensure consistency in recording times of arrival in the register

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop ways to keep parents up to date and aware of, children's progress towards the early learning goals

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk